the cost of production is updated and based on the cost of production I have announced the minimum release price.

I do not think it is quite correct, as the hon. Member has said, to link the percentage increase directly to the rate of inflation. Rate of inflation is as a result of a basket of commodities. It does not mean that in every sector the rate of inflation is 13.6 per cent. The rate of inflation is based on a basket of commodities, but when one works out the cost of production in any one sector, one must look into the inputs in that sector and I believe that the method that has been followed is as accurate a method as possible. I am willing to concede that there can be improvement, but I think this is as good a method as possible. I think the price that has been announced this year reflects the cost of production.

More important than the MRP is the initial payment against the MRP. Last year's initial payment was Rs. 9 per point. This year's initial payment is Rs. 11 per point. This point system is a very complicated system. Hon. Member like Shri Gurupadaswamy and others are more familiar with the point system. I concede that it is a complicated system, but it is a system which the grower understand because this has been the system for years. It was Rs. 9 per point last year and this year we have given Rs. 11 per point. Last year's payment was after deducting purchase tax. This year's initial payment is without deducting purchase tax. Why we have done so is because I believe that some States which have a high purchase tax are reconsidering the matter. I would appeal to the States to reduce, if not abolish, this purchase tax. Rs. 11 per cent works out to approximately 72 per cent of the minimum release price, which means that every grower will in the first instalment recover approximately 72 per cent of his cost. This is the highest in recent years and I think this will be welcomed by coffee growers.

Other larger quesions raised on coffee may be reserved for a wider debate on coffee and not for this occasion.

STATEMENT BY MINISTER

Explosive Device Found on Air India Flight 111 on 1st December, 1991 at Delhi Airport

THE MINISTER OF CIVIL AVIATION AND TOURISM (SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, on 1st Dec., 1991 AI flight No. 111 Boeing-747 from Madras to New York via New Delhi and London arrived at New Delhi at 0705 hrs. The aircraft had 76 passengers and one infant along with 21 crew members on board from Madras. Out of these, 12 passengers disembarked at New Delhi 334 passengers including 4 infants and a fresh set of 22 crew members boarded the aircraft at New Delhi by about 0745 hrs. There were thus a total of 394 passengers, 5 infants, and 22 members of the crew on the flight.

2. As per information available at present, while the catering carts were being positioned in the galley, a PVC bag was found. As the contents looked suspicious. AI security person on duty was alerted who immediately removed the PVC bag from the aircraft to the high lift truck to be taken away from the site. The concerned authorities were informed and the bomb disposal squad of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security located at the Airport rushed to the spot immediately.

3. The device on examination was found to contain the following items:

1. A 9-volt battery
2. Pyro technic substance
3. A torch body
4. An electronic circuit connected with wires.
5. 100 ml. bottle containing a liquid which smelt like petrol.
6. One shaving cream can containing a substance which smelt like LPG.

4. The device was neutralised by the explosive experts.

[Shri Madhav Rao Scindia]

5. By about 0830 hrs. the passengers on board were safely disembarked. The aircraft was removed to a remote place.

6. The matter is under investigation by the Police and intelligence agencies.

7. Meanwhile, Commissioner, Bureau of Civil Aviation Security has been asked to investigate the nature and extent of breach that may have taken place in the prescribed security procedures and recommend what further measures are required to strengthen securi...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): I would request honourable Members to be very brief because the Minister wants to give his reply today itself, Shri A. G. Kulkarni.

SHRI A. G. KULKARNI (Maharashtra): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, at the outset one has to profusely thank the Almighty for averting a catastrophe and tragedy. Though this question is limited only to Civil Aviation, Sir, the atmosphere and the total impact of terrorist activities on the people of this country are terrible. One doesn't know what would happen today or tomorrow. So, Sir, I think one way or the other, my friend, Mr. Scindia would convey to the Home Minister the feelings of the people who are totally bewildered, particularly in the metropolitan cities, which are now speading to the rural areas also. Sir, my questions are like this.

Sir, it seems whatever information we have got, either through the press or through this statement, is brief, but it is just natural. Unless there is a full inquiry nothing much can be said—I agree with that. But the point, as far as the layman is concerned and as it is rightly pointed out, there seems to be a total lack of coordination among the various security agencies. What we find here is, everybody says that the trolley and the trays were sealed and so on, but still one tray contained this device. Mr. Vice-Chairman, whatever has been said about this device in a plastic bag, etc., there are two claims. One newspaper, *The Hindu,* has given the view that one Mr. Haziq, who is in charge of Chief Air says that a representative or employee of Chief Air had first noticed this plastic device, while in other newspapers the report was that it was a Purser in Air India who had first seen the device. This is not a very important point, but the point which is to be highlighted is the laxity, because everybody is claiming that they have found it first. So I want to know from the honourable Minister what the actual position is. Every tray has been sealed, the total container has been sealed, but it seems that while taking the trays on the cart, etc., and loading them into the Air India plane, some mischief must have been done. Mr. Vice-Chairman, I will bring to the notice of the hon. Minister though he may not reply directly—I was told about this while I was discussing about this with many people today—that the infiltration of the JKLF into this country and Pakistan's support to the JKLF have been mainly responsible for this. It would have been a big tragedy had it exploded. So, I want the Government to enquire into this question. Though it was a crude bomb there must be some powerful agency which supplies all these materials.

Some information has come out that Air India or the Indian Airlines, whatever it is, employs outside agencies as carries, casual labour. I want to know whether there is any weakness, any laxity in the security, because of this, because they are not under the purview of total, strict security, because the Air India employees come from a certain discipline from which the casual labour or those of the outside agencies do not come. So, whether there is any improvement possible, I want to know from the Minister.

The last point, Mr. Vice-Chairman, I think, is that though we have avoided the catastrophe, it is a very serious matter. As it was said, it a very serious matter because if such planes face this catastrophe on our soil, it shows that the security is lax though there are many agencies.

Mr. Vice-Chairman, my own small experience I will narrate. I was once in Israel. On the way our plane had landed at an airport in Israel. They brought down all the luggage and re-examined the luggage. We, the passengers, were very much annoyed.

But it seems that now every country is more careful. Particularly in this country we should be more careful because the terrorist infiltration backed by a neighbouring state is very dangerous. From the safety point of view, I want to know what steps have to be taken by the Civil Aviation Minister in consultation with the Home Minister.

Thank you, Sir.

SHRI KAPIL VERMA (Uttar Pradesh): Thank you, Sir, for giving me this opportunity.

I would first thank God for averting a great tragedy, it is very unfortunate. The Air India had a good name. I have had opportunities to travel by it during the last two months. Unfortunately this has happened, and this raises a very serious problem, the problem of security in this Air India which had a very good name till some time ago.

Well, the newspapers today are full of it, and I will not go into it. But one or two points that struck me, are:

The people of the Chef Air, a subsidiary of the Air India, that supplies food caterers—now the complaints are that—have a free run on the tarmac wethout proper investigation, without proper permits. I want to know from the Minister that the employees of the Chef Air, the catering staff, are allowed to go to the plane, to enter the prohibited area without proper verification of their credentials, only on the basis of the letters issued by the caterers. If it is so, it is very serious. You might have noticed in today's paper from Madras that the Secretary of the Union of the Employees of the Corporation had issued a warning a few days ago saying that the casual labour and the workers that are being employed by the catering staff to bring in food for distribution to the passengers into the plane are not the people who have been properly verified by the police according to the standards that are applied to other employees and that the Corporation the Air India are running a big risk. Unfortunately, his warning has proved prophetic and this has happened. Indications are that some staff of the Chef Air had put a bomb into it. How is it that they penetrated into this vast network of security? There are rumours that one arrest has already been made. I would like the Minister to confirm or deny it.

There are various agencies which are doing the security work. There is no proper coordination amongst them. The Air India has got its own security set-up, the International Airports Authority has got its own set-up. Similarly the Indian Airlines has its own security set-up. The Bureau of Civil Aviation, of course, is there. It just like a zig brother looking over the shoulders. Police, of course, is there. Apart from that the catering agencies have their own security. Complaints are that vehicles and employees pass throngh the prohibited areas without proper verification. I would like to know whether the police verifies their conduct and character according to the set standards and it is not done, why it is not done. My information is that the catering staff is responsible for putting the bomb. The Minister should confirm or deny it. This is what I have heard from a very good source. It is a great thing that somebody has been able to smuggle a bomb through this big security network. This shows there is no coodination. It is a very serious matter. This rings an alarm bell. I would like to know what measures the Minister is taking to ensure that such things do not happen again. Of course, the last paragraph indicates that something has been done, but this is not enough. I would say these are the people who are already looking into it—Civil Aviation people, the Bureau and all that. I would request the hon. Minister to make it a very high level inquiry and plug all the loopholes that are there in the security set-up so that such incidents do not recur again. I would also like to know the progress of the investigations held so far and also whether any arrest has been made.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI (MAHARASHTRA): Mr. Vice-Chairman, near disasted and tragedy has been everted.

[Shri Suresh Kalmadi]

Since this morning. Parliament has been very keen to know what exactly has happened. Unfortunately we came to know more through the newspapers that from the Minister's statement. I wish he had taken the House more into confidence by giving as more details. I know that we are going to read much more in the newspapers than what has been given by the Minister in the House today.

This near disaster was detected at the last point not at the Chef Air hotel, not at the security gate not even below the aircraft. It was found at the last point when it was loaded into the bay next to the cockpit. At that point luckily it was discovered. It was noticed in broad daylight luckily. The aircraft just came from Madras. It was in full view of the whole staff, Air India staff, the whole ground crew and the security staff. Luckily at the last moment it was found. By God's grace this did not happen in the night. In this whole statement only two lines are missing that the court of inquiry will be held to find whether the disaster would have taken place. Finally the blame would have come on the pilot if there was an air crash. We would have never known who had done it. The person who found it at the last point, I think, must be rewarded, must be congratulated for finding it out and for preventing an air disaster. I would like to ask the Minister a few questions. May I know whether the security put the security seal on the trolley? May I know whether the security seal put by the caterers was broken or whether it was intact? May I know whether the security staff at the International Airport saw the seal and checked the transport? May I know whether the catering van has a security guard? May I know whether the catering van belonged to the Air India or to the Chief Air, ITDC? There are conflicting reports about it in the newspapers. We came to know that the catering chief was not with the van. He was in the other vehicle not knowing what was going on in this van. May I know who loaded the food packets into the van? As Mr. Kapil Verma asked, the people who loaded the food packets, were they temporary staff or permanent staff? May I know whether they had red and blue passes? The airport is almost under red alert most of the time. They say that these loaders belong to a prestipious organisation, ITDC. Since they belong to a prestigious organisation, there is no need to check whether they have the security passes. Did they think like that? This is what we want to know. Is there going to be a coverup? This is very, very important. May I know whether the driver who was driving the van, is a permanent employee? Is that being looked into? The engineering staff who roam round, whether they belong to the Indian Airlines or Air India, there is no double check on them. There is casualness in the double check. Regarding the gasolene which comes there from the Indian Oil Corporation and the Hindustan Petroleum Corporation and their people who come there, have they got proper passes? We do not know about it. At what point this has taken place? We find only passengers are harassed. The passengers go through the security check and they are checked from top to bottom. But all other security agencies are left free. Nobody bother about the people who come into the tarmac. Everybody just walks in. What I have seen at the technical area of the Palam airport is, people come and go inside, buses of the Indian Airlines and Air India come and go which we are going to pay very heavily passengers are harassed. May I know whether the Minister is going to look into this aspect also?

May I caution the Minister about one thing? The scandalous thing which is going to cause some problems in future is the courier service which is going on board the aircraft. The courer service agents are supposed to keep the parcel 48 hours in advance with the Airport authorities. May I know whether it has come to the light of the hon. Minister that these parcels are booked on telephone just 2 or 3 hours before the flight goes? But actually they are delivered just two hours before the

flight goes. This is the biggest scandal which we are going to pay very heavily for.

I would also like to know whether the Chef Air or the ITDC are overburdened. A few years back, there was an order by the Civil Aviation Ministry that 75 to 80 per cent of the orders of Indian Airlines, Air India and Vayudoot will be given to ITDC. Is this a fact? Are they overburdened? Should the Minister review whether this should be given on merit as to how much they can take? Just to make ITDC more profitable, we cannot overburden Chef Air. This overburdening is where the mischief starts and these are problems that come up.

Also I would like to know whether the polythene pouch bears the address of a Delhi firm. This has come in newspapers. Is this a fact? Was the explosive meant to be set off by remote control? That also you have to check. That means they have just been saved.

Sir, we have a very efficient Minister in Madhavraoji. We have to identify where the fault is, whether it is with the International Airports Auhority, the Civil Aviation security, the Delhi Police, the loaders or the crew. Where is the fault? That guilty must be booked because the guitly today is at large. We cannot afford to be complacent. We must find out all these things which are there. Who is conducting the inquiry, the investigation? Are they the police, the intelligence agencies or the people in the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security? These are the people who were involved. One of them is going to be blamed. Is the Minister going to take a firm stand and give the investigation to the CBI? It must be given to the CBI. I think in one day, the culprit must have run away from there. The cover-up operation must be complete. This should have been given to the CBI at the very moment because the guilty is at large and we cannot afford to be complacent. The Air India is doing very well and they are really gaining in popularity. I hope this incident will not man the passenger traffic The Air India is really catching up globally. So the security aspect is very important. Passengers must be told that the security is going to be very tight and this sort of incidents cannot happen again and I am sure, my friend Mr. Madhavrao Scindia will take all these connected actions. The time has come for us to be really strong and I think we should find the culprit and book him immediately.

Thank you.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर (उत्तर प्रदेश) : श्रीमन्, पहला प्रश्न तो मैं यह पूछना चाहूंगा कि जो उन्होंने डिवाइस लिखी है, इसका पता लगा कि वह किस प्रकार की थी ? क्या ऐसी थी जोकि अपने आप फट जाती या ऐसी थी कि अंदर से आपरेट करके फटती या रिमोट कंट्रोल से उसका विस्फोट किया जाता ? इस बारे में अब तक जो जांच हुई है उसमें ऐक्सपर्ट्स की क्या राय है ? यदि ऐसी स्थिति थी जिसमें कि विस्फोट अंदर स्वयं होता या कोई करता तो उसका अर्थ हो सकता है कि केवल ऐसा कोई व्यक्ति ही उसमें इनवाल्व है जिसने वहां जाकर उसे रख दिया । लेकिन अगर अगर रिमोट कंट्रोल से विस्फोट हो सकता है तो इसका मतलब यह है कि एयरपोर्ट के भीतर भी ऐसा कोई आदमी था जो उसको आपरेट करता । इनवाल्वमेंट दो आदमियों का नहीं है, इसमें किसी बहुत बड़ी एजेन्सी का हाथ लगता है चाहे वह खालिस्तानी हो, चाहे एल०टी०टी०इ० हो या काश्मीरी एजेन्ट हो । मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि किस प्रकार की यह डिवाइस थी क्योंकि उसके कांप्लिकेशंस बड़े हो सकते हैं ।

श्रीमन्, यह भी हो सकता है कि मजाक में किसी ने रख दिया हो । अंदाज मेरा यह है कि यह दिल्ली में हुआ होगा, मैं अखबारों की रिपोर्ट में नहीं जाता । क्या दिल्ली और मद्रास एयरपोर्ट पर यह घटना होने के बाद एयर इंडिया की बदनामी दुनिया भर में नहीं होगी ? सबसे बड़ा खतरा यह है जैसा कि कहते हैं कि बुढ़िया तो मर गई लेकिन खतरा यह है कि मौत ने घर देख लिया क्या

[श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर]

दुबारा यह घटना नहीं हो सकती और क्या विदेशी हमारे जो यात्री आते हैं एयर इंडिया से उनके अंदर भय पैदा नहीं होगा कि एयर इंडिया की फ्लाइट से मत जाओ ?....

श्री पर्वतनेनि उपेन्द्र (आन्ध्र प्रदेश) : स्वदेशियों को नहीं होगा ?

6.00 P.M.

श्री जगदीश प्रसाद माथुर : वह तो है ही । उनकी जान हमेशा खतरे में होती है । एयर इंडिया तो क्या इंडियन एयर लाइन्स में भी हो सकता है । लेकिन जो विदेशी आते जाते हैं या विदेश में हमारे लोग जाते हैं तो मैं पूछना चाहूंगा कि जो इस प्रकार का भय, इस प्रकार का एक स्केयर अन्य देशों में यात्रा करने वालों में है उनके लिए कोई कार्रवाई की गई है या नहीं ? दूसरे, ऐसा लगता है वक्तव्य से कि बहुत ही हल्केपन से लिया गया है इसको, जैसा कि कलमाड़ी साहब ने कहा, सिविल एविएशन के सेक्योरिटी के लोग चैक कर लेंगे । वह तो इसका हिस्सा है ही । पालम एयरपोर्ट जाइये । एयर अथोरिटी वाले कहते हैं कि हमारा कुछ लेना-देना नहीं है, सब पुलिस वाले करते हैं, वे ही लोग चैक करते हैं । जो स्पेशल गेट बना रहता है वहां पर जाइये तो रोक देंगे । बाहर जाइये तो रोक देंगे । सवाल यह है कि यह जो डुएल अथोरिटी है यह हानि पहुंचा रही है क्या ? खासकर दिल्ली पुलिस बहुत बदनाम हो चुकी है । इनएफिशियंट दिखाई दे रही है । रोज डकैती होती है, चोरियां होती हैं, आतंकवादी आ जाते हैं तो मैं पूछना चाहता हूं कि क्यों दिल्ली की पुलिस के हवाले किया हुआ है ? क्या गवर्नमेंट सेक्योरिटी को किसी तरह से टाइट करने पर विचार करेगी ? वैसे सेक्योरिटी टाइट की जानी चाहिए । ये दो-तीन सवाल हैं जो थे जानना चाहता हूं ।

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI (Gujarat): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I think everybody must leave a sigh of relief that, thank God, this was averted. Can you imagine the scene? It is very dreadful. I am scared, I really tremble even to imagine the horrifying scene if this unfortunate thing would have happened. The reason why I am talking about that is, we always wait for the unfortunate to happen. We do not learn from our past experience or, perhaps, do not want to learn from our past experience. Mr. Kalmadi has mentioned so many valid points. We are very happy that Madhavraoji is there. I keep on repeating that he has got a very past track-record and we do hope that he is just not going to let this go away from the mainstream saying, "All right. it has not occurred; so forget it. Let us look after the next day". People have in view this home. But I have my doubts whether the system will let you do that or not.

My first question is: Are we really serious and do we really mean business as far as unearthing the lacunae we have in the various aspects of civil aviation is concerned? Sir, civil aviation, today, is passing through an unprecedented crisis, whether it is in the area of safety or is in the area of the economic situation of our airlines. They are running on losses. Now, this is mainly because right from the loader—and I am talking with full knowledge—to the pilot, leave aside the passenger; everybody is just frustrated with airlines, these particular airlines, Indian Airlines, Air India, Vayudoot, Yamdoot, or whatever it is. This is a very very serious matter. These are the symptoms, not the cause. The cause is lying somewhere else. If you are not healthy, even the slightest virus which is just passing through, which has no intention to knock at your body, at your door, will divert to your area and will catch you. We know that today unfortunately our country is passing through unprecedented crises. We cannot deny that. That is why, if you are not healthy, you are absolutely subjected to catching any kind of virus which is going around. So, I first of all, would like to know, are we going to be serious? I really have my doubts that nothing is going to happen. The reason why I am so pessimistic in this. I have cried horse here on the floor of the House

and in various forums. The hon. Minister knows about it. But, unfortunately, nothing has happened. I have given solid proof of things. But I do not know what the constraint of the hon. Ministers, this Minister also that you are not booking the culprit. Sir, I have mentioned about the DGCA's functioning. This is also related because as Sureshji has very rightly mentioned if something had happened, God forbid, then ultimately passing the buck the pilot would have been blamed. I don't know why we are doing this. I think it is time we should get together, roll our sleeves, get our resources together and call a spade a spade. I don't know why it is happening. If you are politically connected, then you can get away with a murder—I have seen it. I am talking with full responsibility. If you want, I can give you the proof also If you are politically connected, then you are just, you can go scot-free. Sir, in this particular incident... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA (Rajasthan): I don't know how murderers are getting away. You have got political connection.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Of course, I have. The Minister also knows about it.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Did it happen in your regime also?

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Yes, in my regime also. Because people say that they are the Almighty, nobody can touch them—which is a fact—I can give it and the hon. Minister is aware of it... (*Interruptions*)... Sir, it is really shocking how this could be just a trial run. We have seen in he case of the hon. Late Prime Minister, Shri Rajiv Gandhi, there had been some trial runs. I don't know why this could not be one of the trial runs, and if we are not going to take it seriously, what would happen? I am sorry to say that people in this country are getting killed, our past Prime Minister was just killed like that and everything seems to be *ki theek hai, hota hai*; all over the world this thing happens and here also it has happened; forget it and go to the next crisis. I think the time has come when we have to be very, very serious about such things; otherwise, how can on a food trolly you have such devices which contain absolutely explosive material? It says one shaving cream can contain substance which smell like LPG. I think it is an aerosol can kept near the gallery where heat is generated to heat up the food. I am sure it would have exploded I don't understand this thing that when the security man was called, he just picked up the PVC bag. I don't know whether he was trained to do that or not because in the process of doing this also you could cause damage. I really don't know about this.

Sir, there are so many agencies at the airport. You don't know to which agency you are talking. Everybody is just interested in passing the buck. If you talk to the Civil Aviation Department on security matters, they say it is the Department of Home. If you talk to Home, they say it is *falana* department, *dhikana* department. I think the time has come when you have got to spell out whose responsibility it is. Even in this particular episode... (*Interruption*)...Sir, I will take another two to three minutes...

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): Please seek clarifications and don't make a speech.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Sir, in this particular incident so far no resopnsibility has been pinpointed. At least somebody at the top who is really incharge of this should have been suspended. Nothing of that sort ever happens. I don't know why it is so.

Sir, there is another thing which comes to light. These things do not happen unless and until there is some kind of a collusion and I suspect that somebody somewhere is involved and not one person but it could be a team working. It is really a very unfortunate incident which took place, whether it is the year of tourism or not. It is unfortunate be-

[Shri Dineshbhai Trivedi]

cause I am sure everybody would be a little scared. No doubt, Air India has a very good name, the crew is very good, to the services I can vouch personally. I always love to fly with Air India because they have the best of services. But with these kinds of security risks who is going to fly?

One more point I would like to submit is regarding serving of food. It is a very, very serious point. I don't know what happens in Air India, but in the Indian Airlines, I am aware of it, the food given to the pilot is the same as given to the co-pilot. Internationally the pilot and the co-pilot get separate food items whereas the Indian Airlines provide the same food to the pilot as they are providing to the passengers. Sir, I am now referring to food-poisoning. God forbid, if there is a case of food poisoning, the pilot and the co-pilot both are gone. What would happen if somebody puts this kind of a devist? I think we have to look at it very very seriously. Recently, from Calcutta, a plane went to Varanasi. Just before landing, the runway lights went off. The standby lights re supposed to take over immediately but that did not happen. So the plane was diverted to Lucknow. They had to pay the charges in Lucknow. Coming back to Varanasi, again they had to pay the charges there. Why our systems are not working? Whenever there is a crash, we have seen the systems don't work. The passengers are paying through their noses but the systems are not working. Something has to be done. These are all high sounding words. A Joint Parliamentary Committee should be appointed to look into not only this particular incident but generally the working of the security and safety and the working of the Ministry of Civil Aviation, specially of the security etc. Regarding courier services, I hundred and ten per cent agree with Suresh Ji. (*Interruptions*) Sir, close circuit television is very important. (*Interruptions*). Even Chief Air ... (*Interruptions*).

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): Please conclude.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: I just conclude with a humble request to the hon. Minister, kindly don't take this matter lightly. I have no reason to doubt that the Minister will take it easy. But looking at the system, even if you want to work, perhaps, the system may not let you work I am so pessimistic. But I hope that all of us will pool our resources together and I appeal that a Joint Parliamentary Committee should be appointed to look into these incidents in general. Thank you.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): Members are not to make speeches but only to seek clarifications. Shrimati Sarala Maheshwari.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): Sir, we have to call the names according to the priority.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): There are three Members from the Congress party. Please take your seat. (*Interruptions*).

श्रीमती सरला माहेश्वरी : (पश्चिमी बंगाल) : माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष जी, हवाई अड्डा जो अधिकतम सुरक्षा क्षेत्र में आता है, वहां सारी की सारी सुरक्षा व्यवस्था को धत्ता बताते हुए, सुरक्षा व्यवस्था को अंगूठा दिखाते हुए एक बम का अपने निर्दिष्ट स्थान पर पहुंच जाना यह सरकार की सुरक्षा व्यवस्था पर एक बहुत बड़ा प्रश्नचिह्न है और बहुत बड़ा व्यंग है। हमारे मंत्री महोदय अगर सुरक्षा इंतजामों के प्रति इस लापरवाही से सहमत हैं तो मैं यह जानना चाहती हूं कि यह जो दुर्घटना होते होते बाल बाल बच गई, तो इसके लिये जो सुरक्षा अधिकारी जिम्मेदार थे, उन सुरक्षा अधिकारियों के विरुद्ध क्या आपने तत्काल किसी तरह की कोई कार्यवाही की है ?

मेरा दूसरा सवाल यह है कि आपने अपने बयान में सिर्फ इस बात का उल्लेख किया है कि एक पी.वी.सी. का थैला पाया गया। लेकिन अखबारों में बहुत तरह की अन्तर्विरोधी बातें आई है। मैं जानना चाहती हूं कि यह थैला सबसे

पहले किसको मिला ? किसने सबसे पहले इस थैले की तहकीकात की ? क्योंकि जो हमें खबर मिली है, अखबारों में हमने पढ़ा है कि पुलिस का कहना है कि यह एयर इंडिया का स्टाफ है जब कि दूसरी खबर यह है कि यह एयर इंडिया का स्टाफ नहीं है बल्कि भोजन सप्लाई करने वाले होटल का स्टाफ है । क्या मंत्री महोदय इस बात का खुलासा करेंगे कि वह व्यक्ति कौन है जिसने सबसे पहले इस थैले को देखा ? क्या इस संबंध में अभी तक कोई गिरफ्तारी की गई है या नहीं की गई है ?

तीसरा मेरा सवाल यह है कि क्या इस संबंध में अब तक किसी आतंकवादी संगठन ने या किसी भी संगठन ने इस घटना का दायित्व अपने ऊपर लिया है या नहीं लिया है ?

मेरा चौथा सवाल यह है क्योंकि एयर इंडिया को बहुत ही प्रतियोगिता मलक बाजार में काम करना पड़ता है, इसलिए इस दुर्घटना का असर निश्चितरूप से उसके व्यापार पर पड़ेगा ।

क्या मंत्री महोदय ने इस दृष्टि से भी इस पर विचार किया है ? मेरा पांचवां सवाल यह है कि अभी बहुत से सदस्यों ने कहा कि शायद यह एक बहुत बड़े हादसे का ट्रायल था, रिहर्सल था । यह भी हम को जानकारी है कि इस विमान के उड़ने के आधे घंटे के बाद या कुछ क्षणों के बाद ही हमारे प्रधान मंत्री वहां आने वाले थे । कराकस से उनका विमान आने वाला था । क्या यह विमान-III जो है, इसकी उड़ान में जो विलम्ब हुआ और प्रधान मंत्री के विमान के आने में कोई संबंध है, क्या कोई तारतम्य है, इस पर भी आप रोशनी डालेंगे ? इसके इलावा मैं यह कहना चाहूंगी कि आपके जो सुरक्षा इंतजामात हैं, उन सुरक्षा इंतजामात को आप किस तरह से ठीक करने जा रहे हैं ताकि एयर इंडिया में यात्रा करने वाले यात्रियों में एक विश्वास पैदा हो सके ? इसके लिए आपके भावी कार्यक्रम क्या है ? धन्यवाद ।

श्री ईश दत्त यादव : (उत्तर प्रदेश) : माननीय उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, श्री माधवराव सिंधिया जी ने जो सुझो मोटो बयान दिया है, इसके लिए धन्यवाद। लेकिन अगर यह बयान न भी देते तो कोई फर्क पड़ने वाला नहीं था, अंतर पड़ने वाला नहीं था क्योंकि संसद और संसद के माध्यम से पूरा देश कल जो दुर्घटना होने वाली थी जो ईश्वर की कृपा से बच गई उसके बारे में पूरा देश चिंतित है और पूरा देश जानकारी चाहता है ? मुझे लगता है कि 36 घंटों के बाद भी मंत्री महोदय ने कोई जानकारी प्राप्त करने का कष्ट नहीं किया अथवा इन्होंने कोई जानकारी नहीं दी है । इनका जो बयान है, यह सारी बातें तो समाचारपत्रों में अब से 10 घंटे पहले लोगों ने पढ़ ली हैं। मैं इस तरह के बयान को गैरजिम्मेदाराना बयान मानता हूं । आप मंत्री हैं, सर्वोच्च स्थान पर हैं, घटना भयंकर होती , ईश्वर की कृपा से बच गई वरन इस देश की बहुत बड़ी घटना होती । आपने 36 घंटों के अन्दर प्रारम्भिक जांच से भी कोई निष्कर्ष नहीं निकाला है तथा न सदन को और न देश को सूचित कर सके हैं कि इस का क्या कारण हो सकता है । प्रारम्भिक जांच से एक भी अधिकारी एक भी कर्मचारी को जो सुरक्षा व्यवस्था से संबंधित है, आपने निलम्बित नहीं किया है । उसके खिलाफ कोई कार्यवाही नहीं की है । मुझे तो लगता है कि ईश्वर की कृपा से यह दुर्घटना होते होते बच गई । आप इसको लाइटली ले रहे हैं क्योंकि जिस तरीके से जांच करा रहे हैं, इनके बयान से लगता है कि तीन एजेंसीज द्वारा जांच हो रही है । इनके बयान के पैराग्राफ-6 में है–

> "The matter is under investigation by the police and the intelligence agency."

दो एजेंसीज तो यह जांच करने के लिए हो गईं। सातवें पैरा में है––

> Meanwhile Commissioner of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security has been asked to investigate the nature and extent of breach that may have taken place in the prescribed security procedures."

(श्री ईश दत्त यादव)

मैं समझता हूं कि तीन एजेंसीज जांच कर रही हैं। तीनों एजेंसियों के जांच करने का क्षेत्र एक ही है, दायरा एक ही है, एक ही घटना से संबंधित तीनों एजेंसियां जांच कर रही हैं। इससे मैं समझता हूं कि कोई लाभ होने वाला नहीं है। मैं आपके माध्यम से माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या कोई हाई पावर्ड कमेटी बना कर के आप इसकी जांच करायेंगे अन्यथा आपने कह दिया कि तुम भी जांच करो, तम भी जांच करो, तुम भी जांच करो। इस तरह की जांच से कोई निष्कर्ष नहीं निकलने वाला है इस जांच में कंट्राडिक्शन भी हो सकता है और जब तीन एजेंसियों की जांच एक रुप नहीं होगी, कामन नहीं होगी, कंट्राडिक्टेशन होगा फिर माननीय मंत्री जी आप और सरकार उस पर क्या एक्शन ले सकेंगे। मैं समझता हूं कि कोई इस पर एक्शन नहीं ले सकेंगे। फिर यह घटना जो कल होने वाली थी, जो भयंकर घटना होती, इसको धीरे धीरे सरकार भी हम सब लोग भी और देश के लोग भी इस जांच से भूल जायेंगे क्योंकि मैं समझता हूं कि आपने लाइटली इस जांच को लिया है।

आपके बयान से यह भी नहीं मालूम हो रहा है कि आपने कोई अवधि निर्धारित की है कोई टाइम लगाया है कि इस टाइम के अंदर इस की जांच जरूर आ जानी चाहिए जिसको कि आप सदन के अंदर रख सकें और देशवासियों को जानकारी दे सकें। मैं अपनी बात समाप्त करते हुए पुनः दोहरा रहा हूं और माननीय मंत्री जी से चाहता हूं कि आप इस जांच के लिए समय निर्धारित करें और लम्बा समय नहीं क्योंकि लम्बे समय की जांच में सारी जांच फस्टेट हो जाती है और मैटर भूल जाते हैं। दूसरी चीज कि किसी उच्चाधिकारी प्राप्त समिति से कोई हाई पावर्ड कमेटी से आप इसकी जांच करायें, तीन एजेंसियों से जांच न करायें।

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGEN SAIKIA): Is anybody there from the TDP? Yes, Mr. Upendra.

SHRI P. UPENDRA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, the Minister, Mr. Madhavrao Scindia, had a good reputation as Railway Minister. The Civil Aviation Ministry has been the graveyard of many reputations and I am sure he will be careful. Generally the airline services have been far from satisfactory, in regard to safety, catering and punctuality. There is much to be desired here. I have seen whenever an aircraft lands, whether it be at the intermediate airport or the originating station, there is a flurry of activity that takes place. I have also seen that a number of people operate in and around the aircraft without identification badges. I don't understand the type of checking that goes on. what are the authorities doing? How could anybody penetrate the security when you call it a fool-proof security? I would also like to know about the kind of screening that is done with the food items that are supplied. I saw the yoghourt supplied, the coloured yoghourt and I was surprised to note that some unknown suppliers from Safdarjang Enclave were supplying it. What is the guarantee that they would supply genuine items? In fact, there is every possibility that they could plant something in the trays or the cups. What is the guarantee? How do you check these items? I would also like the Minister to mention something about the arrest that was made. Somebody said that a person was arrested today. I would like to know from the Minister as to why he did not consider it necessary to include this piece of information in his statement. If somebody has been taken into custody for interrogation purposes or on suspicious grounds, I would like the Minister to explain to the House about it. In his statement the Minister mentioned about the device that was found. I would like to know him whether the bomb was a powerful one or just a miniature that could not have caused much damage. The device could have been planted by rival

agencies to damage the reputation of Air India. I would like the Minister to throw light on this aspect. The inquiry that has been ordered by the Minister, I find from the statement, is headed by the Commissioner of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security. I do not know whether this is attached to the Civil Aviation Ministry. If it is attached to the Ministry, I don't think the inquiry would be independent. In the case of railways, we have a Commissioner of Railway safety who is attached to the Civil Aviation Ministry. I would like the Minister to explain whether this Commissioner is attached to the Civil Aviation Ministry or some other Ministry so that the inquiry could be conducted independently. I feel that the time has come for us to have a completely independent inquiry body both for railways and airways so that we get the correct reports. I hope the Minister would answer these questions.

SHRI SHABBIR AHMAD SALARIA (Jammu and Kashmir): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I must congratulate the Minister on the discovery of the device in the aircraft so that his tenure is not marred by any unfortunate happening. But the statement which the honourable Minister has given us, 36 hours after the incident, is very sketchy and contains less than what the papers have reported.

First of all, I would like to know whether the six items relating to the device mentioned in para 3 of the statement, taken together, would constitute a bomb capable of exploding and causing any damage. This has not been stated clearly in the statement.

It is stated that a person alerted. But it is not mentioned as to who that person was and to which particular section of the people who were there on duty he belonged.

What happened to that aircraft? Was that aircraft ultimately cleared for take-off?

What immeriate steps have been ordered on the happening of this incident for strict observance for the safety of the passengers and the aircraft?

We have to probe this particular incident through an agency and we have to go into the larger question of how in future we should make our aircraft and pasasengers safe. The two have to be kept apart. The first thing has to be done with all speed so that the evidence is not lost and there is no cover-up. Then, the larger question should be gone into by an independent agency within a stipulated period. It has been pointed out that some Intelligence agencies have also been asked to go into this incident and to investigate. It is not spelt out as to which of the verious agencies have gone into this matter.

We would, therefore, request the honourable Minister to let us have information with regard to these and come to Parilament with a better and more detailed statement tomorrow because the matter is of great importance and it will also affect the airlines which we are running as well as the safety of the travelling public.

As regards the catering service, the honourable Minister must go into it with great care and see if they are responsible and if there is any lapse in that regard, that should be rectified. It should, however, be borne in mind that it is not necessary that the catering service people should have done this, but the men in uniform and with identity can also do it. Thank you, Sir.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA (West Bengal): Sir, I must confess that Delhi is not only the citadel of power, but Delhi also, it seems, has become a den of the militants. After the disappearance of the Romanian diplomat and after his dramatic reappearance in the city,, while the police had collapsed almost in this investigation, we are now having the latest thing from the militants, that is, the planting of a bomb in the aircraft. Therefore, there is only one point and that is that the militants can lay their hands on anything they like and the administration is hopelessly weak to deal with the problem of militancy in the country. Therefore, we have the latest

[Shri Gurudas Das Gupta]

example of a bomb having been planted in the aircraft.

A question is being asked whether the loader was a temporary loader or a permanent loader as if the poor loader, who might have carried the baggage to the aircraft, is the man to be blamed. He might have been the frontman. He might have loaded it knowingly or unknowingly. Or he must have done it at the behest of somebody very important there.

It is now clear that the militants have their sympathisers in most of the places of the Government. And they are very highly placed. Therefore, our finger must be pointed to the root-cause from where the militants gathered their strength. I am told that the man who had kidnapped the Ambassador stayed in the Punjab House in Delhi for two weeks under different names, giving the impression as if the militants can make use of the Goevrnment houses also. Therefore, putting all these pieces of information together, I am constrained to come to the conslusion that Delhi as not only the citadel of power, but it is also the den of the militants, and the Administration, and the Government has been completely over-powered by it. This is the only conclusion people can make. The Members of Parliament are searched before they are allowed to board the plans. I do not complain. That should be done. All the belongings are put into the electronic system to find out whether there has been something dangerous. This system is going on. Even the entry of the visitors has been banned. I aslo do not complain because the security of the country and the security of the aircraft should be the prime consideration. In a system like this, how could that basket get in? My first question is whether he cans that carry the food are put into the same electronic examination as the otiter goods. If it is not, why is it not done? Then, even the food-carrying baskets should be examined in the same way. If it is not, why is it not done?

Secondly, Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, we know that the militants are well-connected with the foreign powers. In the case of Mr. Radu, we are told that after the visit of a very important person from Washington, Pakistan Government was prevailed upon and that Pakistan had its hand in freeing that man. Therefore, will the Minister kindly tell us whether in this case also he suspects that there is a foreign connection, some foreign power is involved? Thirdly, my question is: How many people are you going to punish? Some heads must roll. The heads must be of important persons, not the poor loaders. Some heads must roll. If you do not take some exemplary action, you cannot bring fear in the mind of the people who matter in the administration. Nowadays, there is no accountability, and every body believes that the mistakes can be glossed over. Therefore, something must be done to create panic in the high-ups of the administration to ensure that here is no such dereliction of duty in the future.

SHRI TINDIVANAM G. VENKATARAMAN (Tamil Nadu): Mr. Vice-Chairman, Sir, I must first congratulate the Minister for having come forward with his *suo motu* statemtnt. But at the same time, as our learned friends here have stated, the first point which I would like to know is the caterer's name. That does not find place here. Who is the caterer? Secondary, how does this basket find its way into the catering cart? In the statement, it is stated, "as the contents looked suspicious". When? By whom? Was it at the time when it was placed or after its way or at the time when it was being loaded there onto the aircraft? Thirdly, how did this person suspect with his electronic eye that this bag contained something spurious? That is the thing that cannot be reconed with. He must be a person who must be having an electronic eye or a person who has turned a new leaf, having committed something or a person who has turned a new leaf and

wanted to retreat it back. That must be the case. Otherwise, how does this person, of all the persons, able to suspect that this particular bag is containing something which dangerious? The Minister may take this point into consideration and try to answer. The last point but not the least is, this is a security laps on the part of the Department of Civil Aviation who will suggest setting up of an enquiry by persons from lower or higher cadre. But I suggest that some independent machinery should be there to investigate and find out the truth. Otherwise, as Shri Gurudasji has pointed out, it is very dangerous for us to broad an aircraft. He has stated that the Members of Parliament and their belongings are also searched. Even they are not allowed to go without the security check. That is really understandable. But in this case, how has this lapse occurred? It must be curbed at the earliest point of time.

श्री आनन्द प्रकाश गौतम : (उत्तर प्रदेश) उपसभाध्यक्ष महोदय, एक बड़ी गंभीर घटना होते-होते बच गई और लगभग 36 घंटे हो गए हैं, माननीय मंत्रीजी ने जो वक्तव्य दिया है, उसमें बहुत-से-ऐसे तथ्य हैं जो पहले से ही लोगों को मालूम हैं और माननीय मंत्री जी के वक्तव्य में वह शामिल नहीं है । जिस साधारण तरीके से और बड़ी आसानी से बड़े, हल्के से इस स्टेटमेंट को रखा गया है, वह मात्र औपचारिकता लगती है । वह उसके प्रति बहुत गंभीर नहीं है ।

महोदय, एक पहली बात तो यही है कि जिस व्यक्ति ने सबसे पहले रिपोर्ट किया होगा कि यह थैला मिला है, यह क्या है क्या नहीं है उसकी किसने रिपोर्ट की उसका नाम तक इसमें नहीं बताया गया है जबकि यह बहुत महत्वपूर्ण बात थी । तो यह इतनी लापरवाही हो सकती है । मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि इसके क्या कारण हैं कि उसका नाम इस वक्तव्य में नहीं लिया गया है ?

दूसरे इसमें बताया गया है कि सारे यात्रियों को सुरक्षित रूप से उतार दिया गया । निश्चित रूप से उन यात्रियों के मन में एक गंभीर भय व्याप्त हो गया होगा । उनके बारे में भी आगे कोई सूचना नहीं है कि उन यात्रियों में से कितने लोगों ने अपनी यात्रा आगे की और उनमें से कितने ऐसे लोग थे जिन्होंने अपनी यात्रा मारे डर के स्थगित कर दी । इसकी कोई जानकारी नहीं है । मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूं कि इस बारे में वह उत्तर देंगे ?

महोदय, अंतिम पैराग्राफ में यह निश्चित रूप से माना गया है कि निर्धारित सुरक्षा प्रक्रियाओं का उल्लंघन हुआ है । यह माननीय मंत्रीजी मानते हैं । इसमें किसी प्रकार की जांच की आवश्यकता नहीं है । जांच तो इस बात को करनी है कि कौनसा वह छोटा सा कर्मचारी है निचले स्तर का जिसको ऊपर सापेक्ष रूप से सीधे-सीधे जिम्मेदारी डाली जाती है । मैं यह भी कहना चाहता हूं कि उस छोटे से व्यक्ति से जहां से ये, उसकी जिम्मेदारी की गलती हुई है उसके ऊपर भी तमाम कई बड़े-बड़े अधिकारी होंगे जो इस दायित्व के निर्वहन के लिए जिम्मेदार होंगे । वे भी सरकारी कर्मचारी हैं और बड़ी-बड़ी तनख्वाह पाते हैं । तो जब ये निश्चित हो गया है कि प्रक्रियाओं का उल्लंघन हुआ है तो माननीय मंत्री जी लीक से हटकर कार्यवाही करेंगे जैसे जांच होती है तो उसमें क्या होता है, कि जिस कर्मचारी की सीधे-सीधे गलती पाई जाती है उसको दंड दिया जाता है लेकिन कभी भी ऐसा नहीं होता है कि जो सुपरवायजरी स्टाफ के बड़े-बड़े लोग हैं, बड़े-बड़े अधिकारी हैं, उन पर भी कोई आंच आए और वे सावधान रहें । इसलिए मैं यह जानना चाहता हूं कि क्या माननीय मंत्रीजी इस मामले में जबकि यह निश्चित हो गया है कि निर्धारित सुरक्षा प्रक्रियाओं का उल्लंघन हुआ है, ऐसे में सबसे बड़े अधिकारी को, जिसका कि दायित्व था इन प्रक्रियाओं के पालन करने का, उनके निरीक्षण करने का, तो उनके प्रति भी वह लीक से हटकर कोई कार्यवाही करने का मन बना रहे हैं ?

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: With your permission, I would like to ask one

[Shri Santosh Baprodia]

or two questions. I would not go into the background. What I want to say is, the security department has become a holy cow. He says MPs are frisked; everybody is frisked; I have no objection. Nobody can talk about the security department. But let us understand what the real cause of this problem of security is. Somebody has already mentioned that terrorism has become the order of the day in the country. So, this incident was—whatever be the security lapses—because of terrorist activities. So we have to be always red-alert, because after the even, we have the red alert, then we have the yellow alert, then the green alert, and then no alert. Let us have this alert all the time. Even if the passengers of their friends or relatives are sitting in the sun or rain, in the terminal, I have no objection. But I don't know how it will save the terminal by keeping them outside, because the bomb still goes in and it goes in the aircraft. Why is it happening? One of the reasons is that the security staff is not looking for the things which they should look for, because there is no incentive for them to look for a bomb; there is no incentive. Probably, a packet of Rs. 50/- would be given to him. So, what they are looking for nowadays is valuables. They look for notes; they look for jtwellery; they look for yellow metal like gold, and silver because they can get something out of those poor passengers by harassing them. So, it should be fully publicised outside the security department also that they are not to look for anything and their duty is always to look for ammunition, and that will make them concentrate on their job; otherwise they are concerntrating on something else.

Then, it appears, the ladies are frisked at Jaipur. Chandigarh and Srinagar in the open. They play around with ladies in the name of frisking them in the open, without any enclosure. This kind of security is there and in spite of that, the bomb goes inside.

As one of the hon. Members said, the staff member who located the bomb, should be suitably rewarded and people who are responsible—the erring officers—must be taken to task immediately. At least some heads must roll. Then only confidence will come. How do you get confidence in the minds of the travelling public? I know engineers give air-worthiness certificat without verification; pilots are allowed to fly well-drunk with a certificate that they are not drunk. There was recently a flight from Delhi to Calcutta, only three days before. On Friday also I made a special mention about it. The pilot was manoeuvring at a height of 36,000 ft. the Air India pilot. I am only trying to wish good luck to the hon. Minister who has been a success as Railway Minister and I hope he will be as successful-rather more successful-in the Civil Aviation, because the employees are better paid. But they are not as conscious of their duty as they should be.

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: Mr. Vice-Chairman, I would like, through you, to thank the hon. Members for having brought out the gravity of the situation. I think I can speak on behalf of the Minister of state and on my own behalf, that we are fully seized of the seriousness of the situation and at this time certainly the suggestions, very constructive suggestions which stem really from a concern and worry are well appreciated and we have certainly taken note of it and we shall constantly try to improve and tighten up wherever required.

I would just like to add that after this statement was typed and made ready for circulation, we received further information about the arrest of one Balwinder Singh, a catering officer in Chief Air under the relevant sections of the Explosive Substances Act and Terrorist and Disruptive Activities (Prevention) Act. He is at present in police custody and I believe--because full details are still coming—that a confession has also been made. But obviously these details will come very soon. We should thank the police for that because they are primarily the agency which is responsible. I would also like to assure the hon.

Members that this has caused great consternation in the Civil Aviation Ministry and we have made it very very clear to Air India and the Hotel Corporation of India because, I do believe, primarily it is the concern of the management--the Board of Air India and the Hotel Corporation of India--to run those organisations. It is not the Minister who is the Chairman or the Managing Director. He is generally to get an overview of it. But day-to-day matters had to be handled by the chief executive and his board and his management. I can assure the hon. Members that we make it very, very clear that we view the whole situation very, very gravely and we have been assured by Air India and the Hotel Corporation of India that they are speedily coming to their primary conclusion which is, of course, pending a full enquiry, and that they have assured me that by this evening, very strong action will be taken against those who may be primarily in a way responsible, in the sense that they are in high administrative positions and thereby owe some responsibility for the affair. They may not be directly responsible from the point of view of involvement but certainly have an administrative responsibility. I would like to assure the hon. Member that I am going to sit at the back of Air India and the Hotel Corporation and try and ensure that action is taken against whoever has been found administratively responsible, by this evening itself. I do agree with the hon. Members--our senior Members, Mr. Kulkarni and with various other Members--that a very large number of agencies seem to be working together in this, from the public sector organisations and from the Government side—the police, the Intelligence Bureau, there is an Airport Security, there is a Bureau of Civil Aviation, Air India, Hotel Corporation of India. I think that certainly, as the hon. Members pointed out, a greater degree of coordination, not only from the point of view of prevention of terrorism and from the point of view of air safety, is required amongst the agencies for the normal working of the aircraft and to try and effect that, just about three weeks back, I have instructed the Secretary, Civil Aviation, that he should be the Convenor and the Chairman of the Coordination Committee where every single agency and organisation which comes under Civil Aviation meet every month, whether there is a formal agenda or not, just to sit down and discuss what their problems are and what their views are and understand each other's difficulty and bring about better coordination. Of course, Number I in the agenda as far as this is concerned is the question of air safety and also prevention of terrorism. We will be trying to work towards ensuring a better coordination. A number of questions and a number of comments were passed by the hon. Members. I think that if I had been sitting on their benches, I would probably ask the same questions. They are totally justified. It seems not enough is being said in the statement and that is why some people, in fact, called it irresponsible. But I would like to plead with the hon. Members that if I were to make a statement on a skimpy information and on enquiries which were not fully complete, I would then call that sort of a statement as irresponsible. Because I am talking today in the highest legislative body, I have to be careful about what I say. I don't want to mislead the Members or mislead the country through the House. Newspapers, obviously, have sources of information. Sometimes, in fact, many times, the information is very correct. But many times it is incorrect. But they are not responsible, so to speak, to Parliament. I have to be very, very careful about what I say here and I think the hon. Members would respect that desire of mine that I don't want to say until full enquiries are made and until the police have come up with the records. As far as the agencies are concerned, primarily the Intelligence Agencies in the police who work in coordination are responsible. The Bureau of Civil Aviation Security is certainly under the Civil Aviation Ministry. But primarily they are not responsible for this enquiry. We want them to have a look at the entire gamut of activities that went behind this whole thing so that we can try within ourselves also and find out what the lacunae were, what the lapses were and try and amend those lapses. As far as the full enquiry

[Shri Madhav Rao Scindia]

is concerned, I think this should be, primarily, the responsibility of the Police in co-ordination with the intelligence agencies.

SHRI GURUDAS DAS GUPTA: Delhi Polite or the CBI?

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: It will be the Delhi Police. In regard to casual labour employed in Chef Air, instructions were issued, guidelines were issued, to them that casual labour should be very very carefully screened, and we would like to ensure that, in these sensitive areas, where things are loaded on to aircraft, casual labour are employed absolutely in emergencies, and to the minimum. They should also receive security clearance. These instructions are going to be again reiterated.

Chef Air, or, whoever is dealing with catering, cooking, and the supply of food and provision, have regular screening, and we would like to see whether, in this particular case, these procedures were followed or not. Our instructions are very clear. In regard to the question whether they have been fully implemented in this particular case or not, I am not in a position to tell you yet because enquiries are still being undergone.

I was asked about the various measures that are being taken. Following additional measures, in addition to the existing ones, are being taken.

The air carriers have been asked to ensure that their security staff is present in the catering establishment to get the items packed under supervision, escort them and keep the same under supervision till the items are loaded. The air carriers have been asked to examine the inbuilt security arrangements of the catering establishments. In case these establishments are violating the security instructions. then, to stop taking catering items from them. The deployment of casual l bourers in the catering establishments ' s to be stopped forthwith. The air carriers should insist on the verification of antecedents and character of all personnel in the catering agency deployed for preparation, packing and even escorting their food items. The proper locking of the rolling shutters on the high lift van and checking of seals of the container to be enforced strictly. The high lift truck belongs to Air India. This is the truck on which the items were loaded. An alert has been issued to hold special Airport Security Committee meetings at all civil airports in India to discuss the security arrangements with particular emphasis on catering items. The DCPs at the international airports located at Delhi, Bombay, Calcutta and Madras have been asked to check the catering establishments.

These are the measures which are being taken.

As far as the courier service is concerned, they are also supposed to go through a cooling period. Hon. Member, Mr. Trivedi, pointed this out. Mr. Suresh Kalmadi also pointed this out. We will certainly take a very very long, hard, look at this. It is not being adhered to. I entirely agree. It entails a very great risk. Instructions are there. Normally a cooling period is supposed to be undertaken.

I may point out here on the 16th September and later, again, on the 26th November, a special high alert was sounded by the Bureau of Civil Aviation (Security) and we would like to ensure that all the guidelines that had beln issued on the 16th September and on the 26th November are followed to the last comma and enforced.

The nature of the device is still being determined. As I said, it consisted of one torch, one battery and a small explosive edvice; on the one side of it was what smelt like inflammable fuel and, on the other side, what would smell like LPG But the real,, specific, nature of the device is yet to be determined. It is under examination by the relevent authorities.

Incidentally, Chef Air is not an ITDC unit. It is a Hotel Corporation of India unit.

The person who placed this bomb, the alleged suspect, as I said, has been arrested. Shrimati Sarala Maheshwari asked about it. He is being interrogated. He is in police custody. An unidentified caller, claiming himself to be belonging to Muslim Janbaz Force, a Kashmiri militant organisation, rang up the BBC reporter at Srinagar and claimed responsibility for the planting of the explosive device. At this stage no evidence has come forth toward linking the above incident with the Kashmiri militants. However, the matter is being probed by investigating agencies.

Shri Ish Dutt Yadav said that the senior head should roll and it should not be the junior people. I think Mr. Gurudas Das Gupta also mentioned the same thing. As I have already told you, by this evening certain actions are being taken at much more senior levels.

Time-bound enquiry, I am afraid, is impossible because the nature of these incidents is such that you cannot say that you must inquire within 48 hours or one week or one month. One has to wait till all the details come to light.

About the passengers, this aircraft was fully scanned from the security angle. It has left in the early hours of the morning for its destination. Except for 11 passengers who stayed back all the others who were booked by the flight left by the re-scheduled flight at 4.08 hours on 2nd December.

About food not being x-rayed, you can understand the problems. The trolleys and carts have a lot of metal material in them and it will be difficult to distinguish with so much metal material in it. But it is checked. It is supposed to be checked at the catering establishment, then a catering establishment security man puts a seal into it and that seal is supposed to be unbroken till it reaches...

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: That is what I want to know whether the seal was intact.

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: It looked to be disturbed and that is why the whole thing came to light.

SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA: I am not going into other points. What about the security staff, what they are supposed to see, they do not know what they are looking for.

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: You are talking about airport security, passenger security. What you have said, we will enquire into it. I have also received some reports on this. I will have to co-ordinate this with the Home Ministry. This is a matter of coordination. It sometimes does make life extremely difficult and I can see that there is full understanding about this. Recently I have had a meeting at the International Airport with Shri Rameshwar Thakur, Minister of State for Finance and all the officers of Customs, immigration, security airport authorities, and we are hoping to bring about better co-ordination at the airport. But I think this is a matter which has to be looked into. I will have to take it up with my colleague in the Home Ministry, but certainly we will look into it.

श्री रफीक आलम (बिहार) : किसने डिटेक्ट किया, यह पता लगा ?

श्री माधव राव सिंधिया :आपने जो बात कही है, पुलिस उसकी जांच कर रही है। अभी तक पुलिस यह बताने की स्थिति में नहीं है कि किसने डिस्कवर किया। उसके भी कई क्लेमेंट्स हैं। कोई कहता है मैंने किया, दूसरा कहता है मैंने किया। जब कोई पक्का निष्कर्ष निकलेगा कि फलाने ने किया, वह हमारे ऐम्प्लाई होंगे तो निश्चित रूप से उनको रिवार्ड देंगे... **(व्यवधान)**

7.00 P.M.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY (Pondicherry): Will the Minister look into this personally?

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: I have been talking for the last half an hour.

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: You have said that senior officers are looking into it. I want to know whether the Minister himself will look into this at the own level.

[Shri Madhav Rao Scindia]

SHRI KAPIL VERMA: I want to know whether an independent agency at a high level will look into all these thinks to restore confidence.

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: I can tell you that seniormost officers of the Intelligence Bureau are looking into it. They are very very senior officers. The same thing as far as police officers are concerned. Even the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security is headed by a D.I.G. rank officer. They are very very senior officers and we will certainly ensure that this is dealt with at the level at which it is required.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: My question about providing food to pilots coming from a different source remains unanswered. The Commander is provided from one source and the co-pilot provided from another source.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: This is just in case there is a food poisoning up in mid air, and this could prevent both the Pilots becoming invalid.

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: I am not in a position to answer that.

SHRI DINESHBHAI TRIVEDI: Because that is also a serious matter. If they could put a bomb, they could put some poison in the food also.

SHRI MADHAV RAO SCINDIA: Honourable Vice-Chairman, I would like to assure the House, through you, that we are as concerned as the Members of the House are. We appreciate the fact that you are extremtly worried about the situation. We are too. Certainly a number of things that were highlighted in these interventions will, I think, prove very useful to us guidelines to conduct inquiries along the proper course, and I always look to the assistance of honourable Members. Many times you criticize us, but it is accepted in the spirit because it is constructive criticism, and until we accept criticism, how can we improve? Therefore. I am very grateful to all the honourable Members who have participated. who have tried to point out our shortcoming, and I can only assure you that we will try to succeed. The sincerety of purpose is there both on my part and on the part of the honourable Minister of State and, certainly, the Civil Aviation Ministry. Thank you very much.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN (DR. NAGENDRA SAIKIA): That House stands adjourned till 11 a. m. tomorrow.

The House then adjourned at two minutes past seven of the clock till eleven of the clock on Tuesday, the 3rd December, 1991.